

As Hurricane Isaac made landfall last week, Hurricane Katrina was on the minds of all Americans who remember the devastation of that storm seven years ago.

Once again, the call for evacuations and states of emergency echoed throughout the Gulf Coast. Neighbors took to their streets in boats to rescue others. As Isaac slowed, the rainfall totals piled up. Levees overtopped, fierce winds lashed homes and businesses, and the storm left a million people without power.

Hurricane Isaac will not prove to be as deadly or as expensive as Hurricane Katrina, which took more than 1,800 lives and caused \$81 billion in damage. But, just like Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Isaac has destroyed the places where thousands of Americans live and work. Many of them will not be able to return home for some time. Many more will return to a long, difficult recovery.

And just like seven years ago, Missourians are stepping up to the challenge by donating food and basic supplies to the emergency relief effort. Seven years ago, I was in a convoy of trailers carrying essentials to the Gulf Coast days after Hurricane Katrina hit. I will never forget what I saw there: communities in ruin and the disbelieving faces of shocked people who had lost everything they had in the world.

We've had floods, big and little, in Missouri since 2005. Many of us know all too well the feeling of horror as an unstoppable surge of water careens through our towns, spills into our houses and sweeps away our vehicles – turning trucks into boats and leaving them in places they don't belong. The mud, the branches, the debris – it seems like it will take forever to clean up the mess.

Recovery from a natural disaster is a long, painful process. Whether it is a tornado or a flood, wind or water or both of them, we are no match for the forces of nature. What we can do is rebuild, surely and steadily, by working together.

After Hurricane Isaac, we will need to engage in a long process to help the recovery in the Gulf Coast states go forward. And after the drought in Missouri, we will need to support communities

which are struggling through disaster with sound policies, emergency relief and a heartfelt response to widespread devastation.

Too little water, as well as too much of it, can lay waste to a local economy, to family businesses or to a way of life.

The Missouri drought has not had the national attention or the focus of the media that Hurricane Isaac received, but it is no less devastating to the people in its path. When we band together to help the victims of one disaster, it bears remembering those who are affected by another one right in our own backyards. Their recovery, too, depends on the kindness of the fellow Americans who believe in them and the good work they do. Our urge to aid the recovery from disaster must be just as strong in drought as it is in the flood.